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Researched, compiled and edited by Sanjay Kumar Bhagat, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, New Delhi.
Email: BhagatSK@state.gov

FOCUS

Civil Rights

It was a march and a speech that the world cannot forget. August 28, 1963, an estimated 250,000 people marched to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington where they heard Martin Luther King Jr. give a speech of unsurpassable eloquence. Known ever since from its "I Have a Dream" passages, the speech gave impassioned voice to the demands of the U.S. civil rights movement – equal rights for all citizens, including those who were born black and brown.

The speech particularly, coming near the close of the then, largest demonstration in U.S. history, created a new spirit of hope across the land. It was one of those rare moments in history that changed a nation – paving the way for a transformation of American law and life.

"It was a very peaceful day. A sea of white as well as black faces enveloped the Mall," recalls Dorothy Height, president emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). She was one of the march organizers and sat behind King on the platform. "I think it was a decisive moment not only in U.S. civil rights history, but also in American history. It resulted in a new determination to move toward equality, freedom and greater employment for people of color," she adds.

Height - still an activist and the author of a memoir, Open Wide the Freedom Gates – says, "The real significance of the march, and the speech, was that it changed attitudes. Righteous indignation against racial discrimination became widespread after the march. It led to a time so full of promise and achievement. You could feel it." Representative John Lewis (a Democrat from Georgia), the youngest speaker, at age 23 at the 1963 march, agrees. "Because of the march, because of the involvement of hundreds and thousands of ordinary citizens, we experienced what I like to call a nonviolent revolution under the rule of law – a revolution of values, a revolution of ideas."

The tangible manifestation of the change that Height and Lewis describe was quick in coming. Less than a year after the march, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which banned discrimination in public facilities, such as hotels and restaurants, and also prohibited employment

discrimination. The following year, the Voting Rights Act was enacted to ensure that African Americans had the right to vote in reality as well as on paper. In 1968, Congress passed the Fair Housing Act to remove discrimination in buying and renting of housing. This landmark legislation was complemented by new policies, such as affirmative action, designed to counter the legacy of discrimination and to promote African American advancement.

The 1960s legislation is considered to be the crowning achievement of the civil rights movement. The Civil Rights Act swept away the more blatant forms of segregation and discrimination, banishing centuries-old indignities. The Voting Rights Act empowered millions of African Americans politically, leading to a surge in black officeholders.

The new laws took effect immediately. More evolutionary was a change in attitudes. In a 1963 Newsweek poll, 74 percent of whites said racial integration was "moving too fast," a viewpoint that seems shocking today when attitudes are very different. In a 2000 New York Times poll, for example, 93 percent of whites said they would vote for a qualified black presidential candidate. More than 60 percent approved of interracial marriage. And 80 percent said they did not care whether their neighbors were white or black.

If King were alive today, he likely would applaud the achievement of most of the aims of the 1963 march, while stressing that his dream still has not been fully realized, particularly as relates to equality of economic opportunity. It is a view also stressed by civil rights leaders, such as Height and Lewis. "We have made much of Dr. King's dream come true," says Lewis. But, he adds, "we still have a distance to go." Closing lingering economic and educational disparities among the races, however, is a much more complex task than ending legally sanctioned segregation and mandating voting rights.

As for King, his dream at the March on Washington is now part of the political mainstream, his birthday a national holiday during which Americans honor his ideas and his memory. Political leaders from both major parties supported a memorial to be built in his honor in the nation's capital alongside three giants of American history – Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It is a measure perhaps of how much a nation can grow and change that King's dream now is accepted

as irrefutable truth by the overwhelming majority of Americans.

And not just Americans. Throughout his short life of just 39 years, King fought for racial justice everywhere, not just in the United States. To that end, he traveled the world proclaiming his vision of the "beloved community," and defining racism as a worldwide evil. "Among the moral imperatives of our time, we are challenged to work all over the world with unshakable determination to wipe out the last vestiges of racism," he remarked. "It is no mere American phenomenon. Its vicious grasp knows no national boundaries."

Even on the day of his "I Have a Dream" speech, when he was talking to Americans in particular, King was conscious of the worldwide impact of the march and its message. "As television beamed the image of this extraordinary gathering across the borders and oceans," he said, "everyone who believed in man's capacity to better himself had a moment of inspiration and confidence in the future of the human race."

The universal significance of the events of August 28, 1963, is underlined by Height. "Wherever I have been in the world these last 40 years, it's incredible to me how much people know about the civil rights movement and Dr. King – often in very specific detail. The world was watching us on that day," she says. "The march touched the world as well as America."

The articles included in this section explore the American Civil Rights Movement and the activists associated with that movement.

For additional information, a webliography is presented here for your use. The inclusion of Internet sites other than those of the U.S. government should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein. The websites are current as of their publication date and are subject to change at any time.

Brown v. Board of Education Online Archive
http://www.lib.umich.edu/exhibits/brownarchive/

The Civil Rights Era
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart9.html

The Civil Rights Project
http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu

FOCUS

Congress on Racial Equality (CORE)
http://www.core-online.org

Diversity: Offering a Place for Everyone
http://amlife.america.gov/amlife/diversity/index.html

Free at Last: The U.S. Civil Rights Movement
http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/civilrights/index.html

The King Center
http://thekingcenter.com/tkc/index.asp

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR)
http://www.civilrights.org

The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute
http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
http://www.naacp.org

National Civil Rights Museum
http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org

National Council of Negro Women (NCNW)
http://www.ncnw.org

A Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/mlking.htm

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
http://www.usccr.gov

U.S. Department of Justice -- Civil Rights Division
http://www.usdoj.gov/crt

Voices of Civil Rights
http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org

We Shall Overcome - Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement
http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/civilrights

1. AFRICAN AMERICAN FARMERS AND CIVIL RIGHTS

By Pete Daniel. The Journal of Southern History, v. 73, no. 1, February 2007, pp. 3-38.

Pete Daniel investigates the history and civil rights of the black farmer in southern states of America. The racial concerns of the African American farmers were frequently overshadowed by other racial issues like school segregation and the right to vote. The article also takes stock of the racism that was common at federal and state level agricultural offices, particularly the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which often denied federal benefits to black farmers.

2. THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN WORLD PERSPECTIVE

By Kevin Gaines. OAH Magazine of History, v. 21, no. 1, January 2007, pp. 57-64.

Contrary to the conventional thinking that limits the civil rights movement to the boundaries of United States, Kevin Gaines presents this movement in the global perspective. He cites equal rights campaign by calypso performer Mighty Sparrow and American civil rights movement leader Martin Luther King and how they gave a global dimension to this historical movement. He further shows the ways in which the consciousness of civil rights leaders and black activists was actually a worldview, a framework linking local and global events and perspectives.

3. FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS STATUTES: A PRIMER

By Jody Feder. CRS Report for Congress, January 17, 2008, 7 p.

Under federal law, an array of civil rights statutes is available to protect individuals from discrimination. This report provides a brief summary of selected federal civil rights statutes, including the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Voting Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Fair Housing Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act, the Age Discrimination Act, the Civil Service Reform Act, the Immigration and Nationality Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Congressional Accountability Act.

4. A FIGHT FOR RIGHTS

Scholastic Action, v. 31, no. 8, January 14, 2008, p. 21.

Martin Luther King's fight for equal rights was one of the pivotal forces in amending the contemporary American laws that changed the life of African-Americans. Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most celebrated victory of King's struggle. This Act outlawed racial discrimination making it illegal in all public spaces. However, the King's fight for equal rights did not stop there. The Civil Rights Act actually paved path for many other laws that have made America a much better place to live.

5. FORRESTER BLANCHARD WASHINGTON AND HIS ADVOCACY FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE NEW DEAL

By Frederica H. Barrow. Social Work. v. 52, no. 3, July 2007, pp. 201-208.

Based on Forrester Blanchard Washington's writings and materials found in the National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Maryland, this article illustrates his decision to abort his federal career when the political agenda of Roosevelt administration came in the way of his values and professional ethics. An African-American social work pioneer, Washington was recruited to the first New Deal administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt as director of Negro Work in the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). As director of Negro Work in FERA, he significantly used his reputation and accomplishments as a social work leader to create broad awareness of the negative consequences of the New Deal's social welfare policy for African Americans.

6. GOD AND SOCIAL CHANGE

By Julius Lester. CrossCurrents, v. 56, no. 3, Fall 2006, pp. 303-311.

Julius Lester examines the theological perspective of p articipants in violent and non-violent civil rights movements. According to Lester, while the civil rights movement was responsible for significant social changes, it was at heart, a religious movement. Also discussed is the difference between religion exemplified in the civil rights movement and the Christian, Jewish and Muslim reactionaries.

7. HIS DREAM? EQUALITY FOR ALL.

By Carol Huang. The Christian Science Monitor, Jan 9, 2007, p. 18.

Martin Luther King Jr. is well known for his leadership role in seeking equality for all. But even for the champion of civil rights, it was not an easy job. In his efforts to uplift the social acceptance and racial segregation of African-Americans he had to face many challenges and dangers. Opponents bombed his home, he was arrested many times, and finally on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.

8. JUSTICE FOR ALL: THE LEGACY OF THURGOOD MARSHALL

U.S. Department of State, 2007, 24 p.
http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/tmarshall/index.html

Thurgood Marshall, one of the great American heroes of the 20th century, was closely associated with the forces that consistently advanced the civil rights causes in the United States, demolishing the legal structure that sustained racial segregation in the American South. He and his colleagues greatly contributed towards the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed many forms of private discrimination. Unlike his fellow civil rights leaders, Marshall waged this struggle through the courts and then from within government. Dedicated to the ideal of human rights for all, he brought landmark legal changes in the society improving the lives of millions of men and women in the United States. Noted among his victories are cases like Chambers v. Florida, his first Supreme Court victory; Brown v. Board of Education, victory that outlawed racial segregation in public schools; Sweatt v. Painter and McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents, both Supreme Court victories in two graduate school integration cases.

9. KING'S FINAL YEAR

By Jonathan Alter. Newsweek, v. 147, no. 2, Jan 9, 2006, pp. 42-45.

While recalling his experiences with the final years of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jonathan Alter reviews how King held a political event at King's boyhood home in Chicago. King's work in Chicago, Illinois nationalized the issue of race in America and brought him into the national mainstream. The author laments that despite King's association with the city,

few Chicagoans recall the time King spent in their midst. Alter mentions that the books like At Canaan's Edge remind us of King's challenge to America to "rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed," which even after so many years remains a powerful vision in today's world.

10. MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN BLACK HISTORY (1945-2005)

Ebony, v. 61, no. 4, February 2006, p. 130.

As the title suggests, this article details a chronology of historical and memorable moments in Black history from 1945 to 2005. These include the foundation of "Ebony" magazine on November 1, 1945 marking a new era in Black-oriented journalism, the U.S. Supreme Court's outlawing segregation in the public school system on May 17, 1954, signing of the Civil Rights Bill by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964, and Rita Dove's becoming the first Black named Poet Laureate of the U.S. on May 18, 1993.

11. MUNICIPAL GOLF AND CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1910-1965

By George B. Kirsch. The Journal of African American History, v. 92, no. 3, Summer 2007, pp. 371-392.

The most crucial factor in democratizing American golf was the advent of municipal golf courses. The rise of public golf links in the early to mid-20th century led to the growing popularity of golf among lower and middle class African Americans. However, they were excluded from white country clubs and only a privileged few could afford to enroll in the all-black golf organizations. The victories won in federal courts during the 1950s and 1960s marked the progress of ending the system of legal segregation. George B. Kirsch writes this article with a two-fold purpose. First, he discusses the extent of the desegregation of municipal golf courses in the South, including the border states, prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Secondly, he assesses the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court rulings especially on the racial integration of such municipal facilities prior to 1964.

12. RACISM REVISED: COURTS, LABOR LAW, AND THE INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACIAL ANIMUS

By Paul Frymer. The American Political Science Review, v. 99, no. 3, August 2005, pp. 373-387.

This article sheds some new light on our perception of individual acts of racism. Although race theorists have consistently conceived of racism as both an individual and psychological phenomenon, racism seen through the lens of psychology is an incomplete picture. Paul Frymer argues that despite extensive debate about the broader place and importance of racism in America, there is surprisingly little theoretical or empirical analysis of what leads individuals to commit racist acts. He argues that individual manifestations of racism are the result of a complex set of factors and that there is a need to examine the ways in which institutions promote racist acts by inspiring people to behave in a racist manner or behave in a manner that prompts others to do so. Frymer takes a look at manifestations of racism in labor union elections, analyzing more than 150 cases in which the National Labor Relations Board and U.S. federal appellate courts formally responded to reported violations of racism in a union election.

13. RELIGION AND THE WORKPLACE: LEGAL ANALYSIS OF TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 AS IT APPLIES TO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

By Cynthia Brougher. CRS Report for Congress, October 25, 2007, 6 p.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides protections against discrimination for employees of certain employers. Title VII prohibits discriminatory treatment of employees on the basis of their religious beliefs and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for employees' religious practices. However, religious organizations may be exempt from some of the prohibitions of Title VII. This report reviews the scope of Title VII as it applies to religion and religious organizations and the requirements of both the antidiscrimination protections and the accommodations provision.

14. ROSA PARKS: "ONE OF MANY WHO WOULD FIGHT FOR FREEDOM"

By Wayne Greenhaw. Alabama Heritage, Summer 2007, pp. 8-15.

From her young age, Rosa Parks was inspired by the contemporary fighters in the struggle for civil rights. During those days, Black Americans were subjected to several forms of racial segregations – few were allowed to vote; none were allowed to sit on juries; they

were not allowed to share water fountains, bathroom facilities, luncheon counters, or schools with whites; and they were not allowed to board a city bus through the front door and had to sit behind signs reading "Colored." Numerous incidences involving black citizens receiving blatant abuses when riding a bus often resulted in injuries or even death. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give her bus seat to a white man, an act that led to historic Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama. Greenhaw in this article looks back at her enormous effort to untangle racism in the United States.

15. WILL THE REAL MARTIN LUTHER KING PLEASE STAND UP

By Jeff Nall. The Humanist, v. 65, no. 3, May/June 2005, pp. 4-5.

Recalling Martin Luther King Jr. as a civil rights hero has become a common practice today. Nevertheless, amidst his legacy the entirety of his intellectual prowess and vast philosophical wisdom continues to go unrecognized. In this article, Nall takes a look at why King has become a tool for a variety of causes wrongly associated with him, including the attack on the separation of church and state.

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

16. A DYING BREED

By Andrew Rice. New York Times Magazine, January 27, 2008, pp. 42-47.

For centuries, the nomadic herders of Uganda have kept a hardy breed of longhorn cattle known as the Ankole. However, African herders now prefer imported American-bred Holstein cattle, which have now become the preferred breed for maximal production – a result of global trade, marketing, artificial insemination and the demands of agricultural economics. The author notes that the decline of the Ankole is symptomatic of a larger trend leaving scientists worried – that the world is depending for its food supply on an ever-narrowing range of highly-engineered livestock and food crops that could be susceptible to the ravages of disease. Developing countries still possess much of the biodiversity of local domesticated breeds, which are in danger of disappearing.

17. GLOBAL WARMING LOSERS

By William R. Cline. International Economy, v. 21, no. 4, Fall 2007, pp. 62-65.

Cline writes that global warming will have a more adverse effect on agriculture than has previously been assumed. While some northern regions will become more agriculturally productive due to rising temperatures, they will be more than cancelled out by losses in agricultural productivity in temperate and equatorial areas. Regions that could experience a 25 percent or greater loss in productivity in the coming decades include much of the developing world – Central and South America, Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the entire Indian subcontinent. Cline notes that these findings indicate that international efforts to curb global warming are essential, and that the next step is to deflect the rapidly rising emissions of developing countries. He singles out India, whose dire agricultural prospects should spur it to participate in international efforts to reduce emissions, and exert peer pressure on China to do so as well.

18. PEAK PHOSPHORUS

By Patrick Dery and Bart Anderson. Energy Bulletin, August 13, 2007
http://energybulletin.net/33164.html

In the 1950s, Shell Oil geophysicist M. King Hubbert developed a mathematical model for oil production, in which he correctly predicted that U.S. domestic oil output would peak and decline around 1970. The authors write that Hubbert's methodology can also be applied to any non-renewable resource – in this instance phosphorus, one of several nutrients essential to agriculture. Over the past century, phosphorus has been obtained from finite sources, mainly guano deposits and phosphate rock. Dery tested Hubbert's methods on the South Pacific island nation of Nauru, at one time a major source of phosphate, where phosporus production peaked in the early 1970s. Satisfied with the results, he then applied these research methods to the U.S. and the world. The startling result was that U.S. phosphate production peaked and started to decline around 1988, and on a global level around 1989. The authors note that, as with oil, "trouble begins not when we 'run out' of a resource, but when production peaks. From that point onward, the resource becomes more difficult to extract and more expensive." Fortunately, phosphorus is recyclable. However, most of it is wasted due to fertilizer runoff and in sewage systems. The modern society needs to respond to the phosphorus peak by stemming the massive nutrient leak present in modern-day agricultural and waste-disposal systems, and re-create a nutrient cycle.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

19. HOW DOES IT STACK UP? THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION AT 10

Peter Herby and Eve La Haye. Arms Control Today, v. 37, no. 10, December 2007, pp. 6-10.
http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_12/Herby.asp

The authors, who work for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, describe the 1997 Ottawa Convention to ban anti-personnel landmines as "one of the most successful multilateral arms treaties of recent times." The development of the convention and the ensuing decade of implementation, they say, has "provided a model for cooperative engagement among states, international agencies, civil society organizations, and specialist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in achieving results that none could have achieved alone." Its example offers insights or lessons learned for tackling other global humanitarian problems, since the accord grew from a simple dream to a commitment by 156 nations. The article, which includes a chart listing anti-personnel mine stockpiles for eight countries, describes the convention as "a living process" with a humanitarian program of action that has successfully mobilized thousands of individuals worldwide.

20. THE RISE OF CHINA AND THE FUTURE OF THE WEST

By G. John Ikenberry. Foreign Affairs, v. 87, no. 1, January/February 2008.
http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080101faessay87102/g-john-ikenberry/the-rise-of-china-and-the-future-of-the-west.html

China appears poised to overtake the United States as a world power, but the transition need not be a bloody one, according to Ikenberry, professor of politics and international affairs at Princeton University. China will face not a single power but the entire Western order of democratic capitalist states. That order, built around rules and market openness, creates the conditions for China and other rising powers to gain status and play a role in global governance. "The road to global power, in effect, runs through the Western order and its multilateral economic institutions," Ikenberry says. The coming power shift can occur peacefully and on terms favorable to the United States, but only by the United States reinforcing the Western order's system of global governance, first by reestablishing itself as its foremost supporter.

21. WEAK STATES, STATE FAILURE, AND TERRORISM

By Edward Newman. Terrorism and Political Violence, v. 19, no. 4, Fall 2007, pp. 463-488.

Policymakers and scholars have been making the common assertion for a number of years that weak or failed states are the incubators of terrorism. The author, professor of political science and international studies at the University of Birmingham, notes, however, that terrorist groups have come from and operated within countries which have strong, stable governments. Weak and failed states may offer terrorist groups a tactical advantage, but the economic and logistical opportunities of stronger states gives these same groups strategic advantages, he notes. What weak and failed states offer is "an enabling environment," but they are not incubators, Newman says. Such a condition, his research indicates, is not a sufficient explanation upon which to make significant policy decisions. State-building as a counterterrorism policy is effective only where those governments are also actively engaged in anti-terrorism and counterterrorism efforts. Helping weak or failed states recover and grow is more an issue of improving regional development than one of counterterrorism.

DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS

22. BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP IN BILL SPONSORSHIP

By Michelle A. Barnello and Kathleen A. Bratton. Legislative Studies Quarterly, v. 32, no. 3, August 2007, pp. 449-474.

The authors explore how gender, race, education, age and other factors influence sponsorship of legislation on women's issues in the U.S. Congress. Traditional women's issues include pay equity, domestic violence, child care, and health issues that concern women and children. Personal characteristics have a marked influence on bill sponsorship. Younger, well-educated, and married Congressmen with children sponsor more measures focusing on children's policy than do others. The authors found that African-American Congressmen were more likely than other men to align themselves with women in support of women's issues. Service on committees concerned with health, education and welfare influenced men to lend greater support to women's interests as did legislative position. Democratic Congressmen were more likely to sponsor such legislation than Republican, and partisan differences on such issues had become more polarized. The authors note a trend towards men in general supporting traditional women's issues as a result of societal changes, but women still take the lead on issues that specifically concern them.

23. A LITTLE SUNSHINE

By Melissa Maynard. Governing, v. 20, no. 10, July 2007, pp. 58-60.

States enacted open-meeting and open-records laws (sunshine laws) in the 1950s and 1960s to improve citizen access to government information and increase transparency in government operations. Lawmakers struggle to update the laws to address new technology such as e-mail, teleconferencing and the Internet. Concerns about national security and identity theft led to increased exemptions to sunshine laws since 2001, according to freedom of information advocates. However, they note a recent trend toward more access such as the governor of New York requiring web-casting of state agency proceedings and Florida's new Office of Open Government. Several states are working with Google to make their web sites easier for citizens to search. Noting that new technology will provide new opportunities to avoid disclosing information, Jane Kirtley, a media ethics professor at the University of Minnesota, states that, "government officials and government employees should be starting from the presumption that everything that they do is public information."

24. THE SUPREME COURT'S WRONG TURN-AND HOW TO CORRECT IT

By Edward Kennedy. American Prospect, v. 18, no. 12, December 2007, pp. 14-18.

Kennedy, the senior Democratic Senator from Massachusetts, argues that Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito, posed as moderates during their confirmation hearings, but have shifted positions since they were seated on the U.S. Supreme Court. Now they are moving the Court to the right. The two judges, who advocated judicial "modesty," have been very aggressive in overturning doctrines and statutes, such as curtailing abortion rights. Whether or not it was possible to prevent confirmation of the President's Supreme Court nominees by a Republican-controlled Senate, the confirmation hearings should, at the very least, have informed the American public about the nominees' views on the pressing legal issues of our time. It is no exaggeration to say that the next Supreme Court appointee, which might be nominated by a Democratic President and sent to a Democratic-controlled Senate for confirmation, will have a decisive role in shaping the law on such vital issues as abortion, affirmative action, campaign finance, federalism, and countless other matters. For this reason, both the Democrats and the Republicans need to transcend party politics to work together for reform.

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

25. COVERING THE WORLD

By Sherry Ricchiardi. American Journalism Review, v. 29, no. 6, December 2007/January 2008, pp. 32-39.

The foreign correspondent assigned to a country for a prolonged period with expertise in the local language, culture, history and customs is now a vanishing breed, Ricchiardi writes. Many U.S. news organizations have backed away from foreign news coverage; however, the Associated Press (AP) has made worldwide expansion part of its master plan for future growth. Although newspapers around the United States are focusing on local news, buying AP products if and when they see the need, AP is pinning its hopes on new markets opening beyond North America's borders. AP has recently doubled its reporting power in China, opened an office in Pyongyang, North Korea and will soon open a bureau in Saudi Arabia. "The AP family tree branches out to 243 bureaus in 97 countries, serving news outlets with a potential to reach 1 billion people each day," Ricchiardi writes. AP is investing millions of dollars to upgrade communications among the bureaus worldwide, with an emphasis on high-speed data links and faster portable satellite phones. More work is also being done to develop a more online-oriented international news product with emphasis on "convergence journalism" – a multiplatform approach to presenting information.

26. LYING TO GET THE TRUTH

By Mark Lisheron. American Journalism Review, v. 29, no. 5, October/November 2007, pp. 29-35.
http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=4403

Should reporters use deception to get a story? Lisheron examines this question in a lengthy article revolving around a story written by Ken Silverstein and published in Harper's Magazine's July edition. To get the story – Their Men in Washington: Undercover with D.C.'s Lobbyists for Hire – Silverstein posed as a consultant for a firm needing help in enticing investments to Turkmenistan, a country with a dismal human rights record but rich in oil. The companies he targeted were APCO Associates, and Cassidy & Associates, two of the most powerful lobbying firms in Washington. Although Silverstein was able to extract interesting information about the sleazy lobbying culture and its impact on domestic and foreign policy, his undercover techniques aroused debate in the

journalism establishment – most especially Howard Kurtz, Washington Post media writer, who feels the companies targeted should have had at least an opportunity to counter Silverstein's allegations. Is there room in the modern world for the "muckraking" tradition in journalism? Lisheron seems to think not, writing that "without at least some standard, the 230,000 subscribers to Harper's are on their own, trusting that liars and deceivers are telling them the truth."

27. SOWING FOR APOCALYPSE

By John Seabrook. New Yorker, August 27, 2007, p. 60.

The need to preserve plant seeds is as old as agriculture; carefully preserved seed deposits dating to 6750 BC have been found in Iraq. Today the need for seed preservation is the same as it was in ancient times – in case of devastation due to disease or drought, salvation may lie in an obscure and resistant variety of a food crop plant locked in a seed bank. Most nations and some international organizations maintain seed banks today, but only for plants from their own countries or regions. Cary Fowler, working with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has after many years of labor nearly completed the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, scheduled to open in a remote part of Norway in 2008. The article traces the history, science, politics and economics of seed development and preservation, with biographical sketches of Fowler and other seed bank visionaries.

GLOBAL ISSUES

28. BIG MELT MEETS BIG EMPTY: RETHINKING THE IMPLICATIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND PEAK OIL

By Richard Heinberg. MuseLetter, no. 187, November 2007.
http://www.richardheinberg.com/museletter/187

The author, a prominent educator and author on ecological issues, writes that environmental advocates are focusing on climate change to the exclusion of almost any other issue. The unprecedented melting of the summer ice pack in the Arctic during the summer of 2007 underscored this urgency. Heinberg notes that there are ambitious hopes to enact an equitable program of carbon emissions caps and trading rights. He writes that the developing world, led by China, now has a bargaining chip that in effect amounts to a "global suicide pact" – they will not reduce their emissions until the West agrees to reduce theirs proportionately to the developing world's increased emissions. However, Heinberg notes that carbon-trading fails to take into account the fact that global oil production is peaking and may soon decline, followed by natural gas and coal in the not-too-distant future; if fuel is in scarce supply, no one will be interested in carbon-trading caps. He believes it is essential is for the industrialized West to set an example and acknowledge the necessity to make fundamental changes in its energy, transportation and agricultural systems. He writes that "ultimately, power holders must be convinced that such policies, if obnoxious to them now, will be far less destructive to their interests than a complete breakdown of society and biosphere – which is the very real alternative. For a historic example of a similar conversion of elites think of the 1930s New Deal: then the titans of industry had to sacrifice some of their financial power in order to keep from losing it all."

29. A CHANGING CLIMATE: THE ROAD AHEAD FOR THE UNITED STATES

By Todd Stern and William Antholis. Washington Quarterly, v. 31, no. 1, Winter 2007-08, pp. 175-188.

"What a difference a decade makes." When negotiators agreed to the Kyoto Protocol in December 1997, the U.S. Senate was already on record opposing the treaty and the American public and media were largely uninterested. Now, global warming has become a central focus of the international community, not only as an environmental issue but also as an economic and security concern. But direct and serious engagement by the next President of the U.S. will be required to make real progress in improving the situation. In order to build a consensus among Americans and credibility abroad, the new President must show clearly that U.S. policies are grounded in science and that they are workable. The authors write that there is no time to waste on fruitless discussions and negotiations. American diplomatic efforts in this campaign should be anchored in a core group of key countries, since eight countries are responsible for more than 70% of global emissions. The U.S. must also develop a partnership with China on this issue, since it will be impossible to contain global warming without China's concerted engagement. In this way, the U.S. can lead in the development of international agreements which include binding emissions targets with solid commitments from the more advanced developing countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, China, and India. The U.S. and other developed countries must help the lesser developed countries to build their capacity to address emissions.

U.S. SOCIETY, VALUES & POLITICS

30. THE ART OF INFLUENCE

By Michael Duncan. Art in America, v. 95, no. 5, May 2007, pp. 172-177.

A useful way to reevaluate the work of artists is to examine how, over time, their work has changed due to the influence of other artists. "Enigma Variations" at the Santa Monica Museum of Art explores the effect that the work of Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico had on American postmodernist Philip Guston, demonstrating surprising thematic and stylistic connections between the two; as a teenager in Los Angeles, Guston was dazzled by de Chirico's early work. "Magritte and Contemporary Art" at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art features the work of Magritte side-by-side with that of 31 contemporary American artists, including Jasper Johns. In his own time, Magritte was regarded as an outsider to the Surrealist movement; however, the exhibition shows Magritte's continuing importance over the past 40 years. Magritte's turn away from abstraction to surrealism was also influenced by de Chirico. Although Magritte's influence on popular culture was not a primary focus of the Los Angeles exhibition, his early career in advertising explains how many of his surrealist images are more recognizable than those of Salvador Dali.

31. CORPORATE AMERICA IN A POST-ADA WORLD

By Yoji Cole. DiversityInc, v. 6, no. 10, November/December 2007, pp. 70-76.

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) opened some doors in the workplace but opportunities for people with disabilities remain elusive. However, executives with disabilities who were interviewed for this article credit the ADA with broadening the opportunities in corporate America, but they emphasize that legislation alone cannot create a culture completely accepting of people with disabilities. For that to happen, more people with disabilities must self-identify and demonstrate their talents. ADA requires employees to provide access and technology to help people with disabilities succeed at work but it does not force recruitment efforts. This is changing as the lack of skilled workers in the United States has forced corporations to focus attention on the talents of a group of people previously ignored, including people with disabilities and people of color. The article includes list of organizations that provide support for the almost 305,000 members of the U.S. military who were disabled in the line of duty during the Iraq War. The complete list can be found online at http://www.DiversityInc.com/veterans.

32. MELINDA GATES GOES PUBLIC

By Patricia Sellers. Fortune, v. 157, no. 1, January 21, 2008, p. 44.

Melinda Gates, wife of Microsoft Corporation founder Bill Gates, talks about her husband, her work in partnership with Warren Buffett, her role in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Foundation's new approach to philanthropy. In 2005, the Foundation increased its giving for global health, including more than $436 million in grants through its Grand Challenges in Global Health, a public-private partnership to develop health technology for the developing world. The Gates Foundation has adopted a practical, get-it-done approach; where government-based one-size-fits-all efforts fail, the foundation instead assembles the right partners and the specific expertise required to solve a given problem. Depending on the issue, the foundation might work with governments, nonprofit organizations, businesses, or individuals. These efforts have created new incentives for corporate involvement and redefined traditional public-private boundaries, all in the name of having "the greatest impact for the most people."

33. A SENSE OF ELSEWHERE

By Vartan Gregorian. American Libraries, v. 38, no. 10, November 2007, pp. 46-48.

The author, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, salutes the power of libraries as "launching pads for the imagination", the institutions that are most representative of an open society. Libraries contain a nation's heritage and the tools for learning and understanding – a place where immigrants learn English and bridge the distances between their "old" country and their new adopted land. In 2001, more than twenty organizations created by industrialist Andrew Carnegie celebrated the 100th anniversary of his philanthropic work. Perhaps his most lasting contribution was his endowment of libraries, an act that created over 1600 libraries in the U.S. and about 1000 in Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and Fiji. Today, American libraries have embraced technology and have inspired libraries around the world to follow suit. American libraries were the first to allow circulation of books and periodicals, and the first to promote the openness of library collections.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

34. BAR CODING FOR BOTANY

By Kenneth M Cameron. Natural History, v. 116, no. 2, March 2007, pp. 52-57.

In recent years, zoologists have been developing DNA databases for various animal species. This has resulted in changes to the classification of species and a better understanding of evolution and the relationships among animal life forms. This new type of classification is known as barcoding - pinpointing DNA sequences that are common, yet distinctive for each species. Barcoding animal DNA is relatively easy since almost all possess a genome known as cox1 – universal yet distinct. Botanists have been slow to undertake similar research on plant life due to the difficulty in identifying a common yet distinctive gene or gene set. The author reports on recent breakthroughs of a worldwide effort to find the five or six gene sequences which will enable developing a molecular basis for plant classification. The research has already resulted in changes in classification of certain species. Cameron envisions applications that would include identifying species rapidly before they become extinct, reducing the sale of "fake" herbal supplements to consumers, intercepting plant smugglers, and opening up new areas of medical research as plant families are more accurately identified. A new classification diagram of flowering plants accompanies the article.

35. DOWN GO THE DAMS

By Jane C. Marks. Scientific American, v. 296, no. 3, March 2007, pp. 66-71.

Numerous dams around the world have been removed in recent years as they became more costly to maintain, contributed less to electrical power generation or conflicted with communities that want free-flowing rivers. Although dam removal returns a river to a more natural state, often with native species reestablishing populations as water quality improves, unanticipated effects may offset these benefits. Contaminated sediments trapped behind the dam, movement of non-native plants and animals to parts of the river formerly blocked by the dam, and flood control on some rivers present challenges to planners. The author, an ecologist at Northern Arizona University, is working on the restoration of an Arizona river dammed in the early twentieth century. Water flow was returned to the river when its hydroelectric plant was decommissioned in 2005. The success of native fish and plant species reintroduced along the river is being monitored and will help determine in 2010 whether the dam is removed or just lowered.

36. THE PHYSICAL SCIENCE BEHIND CLIMATE CHANGE

By William Collins, et al. Scientific American, v. 297, no. 2, August 2007, pp. 64-73.

The authors, scientists who participated in Working Group I of the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment, write that the growing record of observations and study show that over the past twenty years, evidence that human beings are affecting the climate has "accumulated inexorably", and that scientific community is more certain of this than ever. The authors summarize the findings of the latest IPCC report, noting that 11 of the past 12 years have been the warmest since reliable records began around 1850, and that concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere today are roughly 35 percent above preindustrial levels. They discuss some of the uncertainties, noting that climate model predictions become cloudy out beyond a century or so – but the earth "will be living with the consequences of climate change for at least the next thousand years."

37. POLYMERS ARE FOREVER

By Alan Weisman. Orion, May/June 2007.
http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/270

The world's oceans are accumulating immense amounts of manmade plastic debris, some of it coming from ships, but most of it originating from shore. The author writes that plastic does not biodegrade – it only photodegrades, becoming more brittle with exposure to ultraviolet light or being ground down by the mechanical action of waves. Researchers have discovered that plastic is being reduced to microscopic particles, even individual molecules, but that no organism is capable of digesting it. Weisman notes that, except for a small percentage that has been incinerated, all the plastic ever made is still present in the environment today and will eventually be ingested by every living organism. Particles of plastic act as "sponges" for toxic chemicals such as DDT and PCBs, enabling them to enter the marine food chain if ingested by jellyfish and zooplankton. The author writes that researchers have found that microorganisms have learned to digest oil and other non-natural substances, but there is no way to predict how long it will take for microbes to evolve that can handle polyethylene, PVC and other polymers.

The American Libraries in India

The American Library
Gemini Circle, Chennai - 600 006
Library Director: Mr. M.K. Jagadish
Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-44-28574000 ext. 4017 & 4089
Fax: 91-44-28574307, Email: chennairefdesk@state.gov
Web Address: http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/irc.html

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Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-33-39846398/99
Fax: 91-33-22882445, Email: kolkataamlibrary@state.gov
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Library Director: Ms. Usha Sunil
Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-22-22624590/92 ext. 2204
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The American Library
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Online catalog for The American Libraries in India

http://americanlibrary.in.library.net

Printed and published by Larry Schwartz for the Public Affairs Section,
U.S. Embassy, American Center, New Delhi.
Printed at Rakesh Press, New Delhi.

03/08-6850